



February 11, 2016

## Hail Caesar!



*Hail, Caesar!* is a valentine to old Hollywood that is set back in the days when the studios owned the movie stars and protected their public image from scandal and gossip. The Coen brothers have gathered together a romping celestial constellation of parodies from the Western, Musical, and Roman Epic genres and tossed them into a

witty salad that pokes fun at the absurdity of the movie business. We follow the guilt-ridden studio executive Josh Brolin, whose character struggles with moral questions while getting his films made as his stars get caught up in the usual messes.

George Clooney plays the matinee idol whose disappearance causes all sorts of upheaval. His captors are the very ones who give voice to his character, a roman soldier who delivers a perfect soliloquy until ... What it takes to get him to deliver his lines and the work behind the scenes of the scenes are what makes *Hail, Caesar!* so much fun. *Hail, Caesar!* examines the heart and soul of the movie business. It is the final product that comes together from all the background and backstage antics that give meaning to the industry.

Those who spend their lives writing, directing and producing those precious hours of escapism the world holds so dear could not do anything else. The craziness of the business is what draws just the right people to it; those who are rebellious, creative, different and unique, and those who live to write about them. That is what *Hail, Caesar!* is all about. Choosing what you love to do and doing it, even badly, is better than not



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doing it at all. Egos, deadlines and budgets aside, the magic is what happens when the theater goes dark until the credits roll at the end.

The characters are over the top imitations of stars like Esther Williams, Gene Autry, Gene Kelly and Charlton Heston. Before there was ever a TMZ, there was the power of egomaniacal gossip columnists that could make or break careers with the touch of a typewriter. At the end of it all, apart from politics and personal lives, we who love films have held these flawed but amazingly talented people above the rest because they give us hope that humanity can be what the movies portray. Full of heroes and beautiful people living out our fantasies. That's what movies give to us. And that is why we go. I give *Hail, Caesar!* 4/5 golden tickets.

